

**Information Technology Support Services II Contract (ITSSC II)**

**Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001**

**Draft Solicitation Questions/Responses**

<b>Question #</b>	<b>SOW Reference</b>	<b>Industry Question/Comment</b>	<b>SSA Response</b>
1.	E3-2.1d paragraph 2	<p>Each of the three single contracts that reference your corporate experience must be as a <u>prime contractor on single contract performing all five task areas with an annual obligated amount exceeding \$100M, and that provides a minimum of 300 contractor personnel supporting all five task areas.</u> <b>Note: The Government is not requesting, nor will it accept, information on any proposed subcontractor's experience, teaming arrangements, or information on experience gained in the five task areas if the experience was not similar and relevant to that described herein.</b></p> <p>Does the highlighted note indicate that subcontractor experience may only be referenced when it was in support of the Prime's Corporate Experience contracts?</p>	SSA is only requesting the information on the Corporate Experience of the Offeror as a prime contractor (which could have included the use of subcontractors) and not any Corporate Experience as a subcontractor or any of offeror's proposed subcontractors.
2.	E3-2.1d paragraph 2	Please confirm that IDIQ Task Order Contracts and/or Schedules may be used as acceptable single contracts as long as they meet the Factor 1 - Corporate Experience requirements.	Yes, an Offeror may use an IDIQ contract for its Corporate Experience but only in relation to the task orders/work that was performed for a single Agency/Company.
3.	E3-2.1d paragraph 2	Please confirm the Prime can use subcontractor personnel that are on the contract to meet the 300 contractor personnel requirement.	SSA is revising the solicitation to remove the language regarding 300 contractor personnel.
4.	E3-3.2.1 Evaluation Criteria for Factor 1 Corporate Experience	Please confirm the corporate experience (three contracts) will be evaluated collectively for how much similar experience and how much relevant experience they have for each sub-factor.	SSA will evaluate each single contract (of the three requested contracts) against the standards for determining similarity to the work described in the Statement of Work and then assign an overall adjectival rating to the

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			offeror's Corporate Experience.
5.	E3-2.1d Factor 1 - Corporate Experience paragraph 2	Request the requirement be modified to read as follows: Each of the three single contracts that reference your corporate experience must be as a <u>prime</u> contractor on single contract performing <u>all five task areas with an annual obligated amount exceeding \$50M</u> , and that <u>provides a minimum of 150 contractor personnel supporting all five task areas.</u>	SSA is revising the solicitation to remove the language regarding 300 contractor personnel and revising the language to reduce the annual obligated amount from \$100M to \$70M.
6.	E3-2.1.f; E3-2.3	DFRP mentions PPQs are to be provided in sealed envelopes. Since this proposal is required to be delivered electronically, will the Government change the PPQs to be delivered electronically and directly to SSA?	SSA is revising the solicitation to remove the requirement that Offeror's include completed Past Performance Questionnaires with their proposal submissions. SSA will use the references cited by the offeror, under the Past Performance evaluation factor, to contact directly and request their completion and submission of the questionnaire to SSA.
7.	4.D and 4.E	Would the government please clarify the difference between the quality control and assurance requirements for Task Area C versus Task Area D. (See Sheet 2 for the Task Area Excerpts referenced for this question)	Task Area C is for software engineering and management support services and Task Area D is for systems admin/infrastructure and systems security support. Quality control/assurance requirements would be applicable to those areas as defined in task order specific Statements of Work.
8.	4.D and 4.E	Would the government please clarify the difference between the security requirements for Task Area C versus Task Area D. (See Sheet 2 for the Task Area Excerpts referenced for this question)	Sample activities for security requirements in Task Area C are listed under the 'typical activities' section including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternatives Analysis</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Backup and Restore of Application Data</li><li>• Backup Software for Disaster Recovery</li><li>• Business Re-engineering</li><li>• Configuration Management</li><li>• Etc...</li></ul> <p>Security requirements for Task Area D include supporting the infrastructure as it relates to systems security as well as addressing cyber security such as monitoring agency systems for specific network vulnerabilities.</p>
9.	E3-2.3	Will the Government permit encrypted e-mail deliveries? What are the size limits on emails with attachments? Will the government allow the contractor to submit the proposal in multiple emails?	SSA is revising the solicitation to remove the requirement that Offeror's submit their proposal via email to the Contracting Officer. Instead, Offerors are to use FedConnect ( <a href="http://www.fedconnect.net">www.fedconnect.net</a> ) to submit their proposals. The size limits on attachments on the FedConnect side are 25MB per attachment or 100MB total. That is for messages via the message center and for submitted responses. Vendor access and communication to FedConnect is handled via a secure message center. The FedConnect Message Center works much like a standard email program. All communications between a registered vendor and the

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			FedConnect system, as well as communications between FedConnect and SSA's PRISM system, use the secure TLS protocol with FIPS 140-2 compliant encryption. The applied encryption meets the federal government security standards for data confidentiality and integrity of transmitted data over public networks under both the FISMA and FedRAMP security framework.
10.	E3-2.3	Will the Government permit 11X17 fold-outs for tables, charts, graphs, and figures, with each fold-out counting as two pages?	Yes, each fold-out will count as two pages.
11.	E3-2, Para b E3-2.1	Will the Government please clarify whether the cover page, title page, table of contents, glossary of acronyms and terms, or requirements traceability matrix are included in the 275 page limit? If so, will the Government consider excluding these along with the Statement Offeror consents to terms and conditions outlined in Sections A-D of SSA-RFP-17-1001; Completed Sections C3-16(d), C3-19, C4-3, C4-4, and D – Attachment 6, Offeror Reps and Certs; and Signed SF 1449 from the 275 page limitation?	SSA is revising the solicitation to increase the page limitation to 300 total pages for Volume I - Non-Price Factors that does include the cover pages, title page, table of contents, glossary of acronyms and terms, and the requirements traceability matrix (i.e. no exclusions from the page limitation).
12.	E3-2.3	Will the Government allow proposal text at 10 pt. font, and as low as 8 pt. Arial for tables, charts, graphs, and figures?	SSA is revising the solicitation to identify that proposal text not be smaller than 11 point font Arial or Times New Roman and tables/charts/graphs not be smaller than 9 point font Arial or Times New Roman.

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13.	E3-2.2.d	Since Multiple Award IDIQ contracts do not have an award value, please confirm that the Corporate Experience / Past Performance Obligated Value criteria is met if the value of awarded IDIQ task orders for one agency exceeds \$100M in a year.	SSA will use the total annual dollars obligated, <u>by a single agency/organization</u> , on all task orders under an IDIQ contract or all call orders under a Blanket Purchase Agreement for purposes of determining similar Corporate Experience.
14.	B-3 (c)i	<p>“In addition, the Government will use the fixed hourly rates current at the start of performance and not necessarily current at time of placing the order.</p> <p>However, if the Government issues an order in one contract period, with performance starting in that period, but crosses into the next contract period, the fixed hourly rates will be those in effect at the start of performance even though performance crosses into the next contract period.”</p> <p>Question: If the performance period covers more than one rate schedule (i.e., “... the Government issues an order in one contract period, with performance starting in that period, but crosses into the next contract period, the fixed hourly rates will be those in effect at the start of performance even though performance crosses into the next contract period”) it appears</p>	If the Government issues a task order in one contract period (i.e. Contract Year 2), with performance starting in that period, but crosses into the next contract period (i.e. Contract Year 3), the fixed hourly rates will be those in effect at the start of performance (i.e. Contract Year 2) even though performance crosses into the next contract period. SSA wants to emphasize that point as it will not consider allowing new rates based on escalation or blended hour rates for task order performance that crosses into another contract period.

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		the Government is restricting reimbursement to the then current rate schedule and thereby denying the contractor the benefit of any recovery of costs due to increased labor costs over time. Would the Government consider allowing new rates based on escalation or blended hourly rates to allow a more accurate representation of the true labor costs?	
15.	B-3(c)iv	<p>Assumptions: The TOP may include any assumptions on the Contractor's part used in developing the TOP and costs.</p> <p>Question: Will the contractor's proposal be incorporated in the task order? If not, how will the TOP assumptions be incorporated in the task order?</p>	No, a contractor's task order proposal (TOP) and any of the TOP assumptions will not be incorporated into any resulting task order.
16.	B-4 C2-4(d)	<p>B-4: Task Order Period of Performance for services: The task order period of performance for services establishes the timeframe for services for each individual task orders placed under this contract during the <i>ordering</i> period stated above. In addition, task orders may include option periods to continue services for the timeframe specified within the order.</p> <p>C2-4(d): ...the Contractor shall not be required to make any deliveries under this contract after 365 days after the end of the last option period.</p> <p>Question: Can a Task Order be issued for multiple years? If so how many years? Can a Task Order have a period of performance</p>	<p>Yes, a task order with a base period (i.e. 12-months) of performance can include multiple optional periods of performance (such as four 12-month options) depending on the nature of services required and whether or not it is in the Government's best interest to include options to extend the term of the task order.</p> <p>Task Orders can be issued up to the last day of the last <u>exercised</u> ordering period. A task order can have a period of performance beyond 365 days from the date of the last exercised optional</p>

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		beyond 365 days of the date of the last optional ordering period of the IDIQ contract? Please clarify the limits on the period of performance of the Task Order that can be ordered under the IDIQ contract.	ordering period of the IDIQ contract if that task order contains optional periods of performance (see paragraph above) or services are extended per FAR 52.217-8 Option to Extend Services.
17.	C1-4	<p>Paragraph (i)(1)(ii)(D)(2) – Indirect Costs. The Government will reimburse the Contractor for indirect costs on a pro-rata basis over the period of contract performance at the following fixed price: [NONE]</p> <p>Question: By specifying “[NONE]” it our understanding that SSA is not willing to reimburse Contractor’s for any allocable indirect costs associated with ODCs, including travel. Since the Contractor has no control on the amount of travel or ODCs that the Government could order, would SSA consider revising this to state “Each order must list separately the fixed amount for the indirect costs and payment schedule”?</p>	SSA will not be revising the solicitation to remove [None] since SSA is not willing to reimburse contractors for indirect costs (such as material handling or general & administrative) associated with other direct costs including travel.
18.	E3-2.2	<p>Volume II must include all pricing data required by the solicitation, including all pricing tables. Price Factors Volume is limited to 25 pages (inclusive of appendices, exhibits, schedules, annexes, and attachments). Provide only the specific information requested. Any information submitted that exceeds the first 25 pages (inclusive of appendices, exhibits, schedules, annexes, and attachments) of the Price Factors Volume will not be evaluated.</p> <p>Question: Given the requirement to provide</p>	SSA is revising the solicitation to increase the page limitation for Volume II – Price Factors from 25 pages to 75 pages.

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		<p>“data other than certified cost or pricing data” including relevant current and historical price lists/catalogs the 25 page count appears extremely restrictive. Can the 25 page limitation exclude documentation required to comply with FAR 15.403-3?</p>	
19.	Addendum2 B-4 Period of Performance	<p>This need will support the agency in addressing Agency Strategic Plan and Information Resources Management Strategic Plan goals and objectives and to assist the agency in developing the systems to support the agency for the next <i>ten</i> years.</p> <p>The ordering period of the multiple award contracts, including the number of options, may cover the timeframe of January 2017 through September 2026.</p> <p>Ordering Period: The IDIQ <i>ordering</i> period of performance establishes the timeframe in which the CO may issue task orders against this contract for a period up to and including approximately 123 months from the effective date of this contract (if all options are exercised).</p> <p>Question: The POP stated in Addendum 2 and the RFP do not match. Is the POP for 10 full years (120 months) or for 9 years and 9 months (117 months) or for 123 months?</p>	<p>The IDIQ’s ordering period is up to 123 months if all the optional periods are exercised including the Option to Extend Services (FAR 52.217-8)</p>



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20.	E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors	<p>Volume I must include a table of contents using the same headings marked below, along with separate sections for each of the requested information herein.</p> <p>Question: Would the Government kindly consider that the cover page, table of contents/exhibits, and list of acronyms not be included in the Non-Price Factors Volume 250 page count?</p>	See response to Question #11
21.	E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors f. Factor 3 - Past Performance	<p>The Offeror must request that each reference return a completed questionnaire to the Offeror for inclusion in the Offeror’s proposal.</p> <p>Verify and ensure all information provided in support of your cited references for past performance is complete, comprehensive, accurate, and current.</p> <p>Question: Does SSA expect that questionnaires provided by the nine references to be sealed? If so, it is recommended that the questionnaires not be included in the in the Non-Price Factors Volume 250 page count.</p>	See response to Question #6
22.	E3-2.2 Volume II- Price Factors	<p>TAB 1- Labor Pricing, will automatically calculate the estimated annual price and total labor price...</p> <p>Question: The Draft did not include an Excel file showing calculations. Since the calculations are not shown in the included PDF file, is the price calculated off the Contractors Hourly Rate or the Discounted Hourly Rate?</p>	The Pricing Matrix to be included in the solicitation will be an Excel file and it has been revised to reflect only one column for hourly rates, which is the “Contractor’s Hourly Rate”.

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23.	E3-3.2.3	<p>The past performance requirements state; “...Offeror’s past performance in providing similar information technology support services efforts on three single contracts as a prime contractor performing all five task areas with an annual obligated amount exceeding \$100M, and that provides a minimum of 300 contractor personnel supporting all five task within the timeframe specified under Section E3-2.1(d).”</p> <p>Question: Would the Government consider in the spirit of Full &amp; Open competition inviting innovative outcome-oriented, performance-based approaches to SSA’s mission-focused IT business functions and initiatives – prime contractors with excellent proven performance and successes in the \$50M+, 100+ FTE range? We concur that, to fulfill SSA’s mission, all task areas must demonstrate expertise inherent to the prime’s proven performance. This past performance consideration would allow for industry-proven approaches with cost-saving, performance based emphasis, while exceeding SSA mission goals within a secure IT environment.</p>	See response to Questions #4 and #5
24.		Draft RFP –The footer on each page is labeled "Level 6C = AIS High Risk". Can the Government provide the intent for including this footer?	The level identified denotes the security classification for the work to be performed under the contract. The solicitation has been revised to lower the level to 5C=AIS Moderate Risk.
25.		“Contractor must respond to the Government’s RFTOP within seven calendar days after receipt	SSA is revising the solicitation increase the minimum number of days

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	Section B-3(b) Ordering, Page 9	of the request.” As a 7 day response time can be very short for providing technical responses and level of effort estimates for complex tasks, will the Government consider increasing the response time to a minimum of 14 calendar days?	to 10 business days.
26.	C3-3 2352.204-1 Security and Suitability Requirements, Page 33	Since the Privacy Act applies when a solicitation requests for the design, development or operation of any system of records on individuals to accomplish an agency function, and the contract specifically identifies the system of records and the design or operation work the contractor is to perform, would SSA consider including The Privacy Act of 1974 clause only in those RFTOPs where it is truly applicable instead of at the overall IDIQ level?	The clause 2352.204-1 Security and Suitability Requirements is applicable at the IDIQ contract level and flows down to individual task orders as stated under the “Note” Section of Section C, page 13.
27.	Section E3-2.1 Volume I –Non-Price Factors, Page 82	Evaluation of Experience and Qualifications of Proposed Key Personnel: “Extent to which the key personnel’s experience, as evidenced by the resumes, performing work as a Program/Project Manager/Director, and experience performing work as a Business Operations Specialist on similar contracts demonstrate the qualifications to satisfy the general description and principal functions of the position description in Section D, Attachment 3, Labor Categories and Qualifications.” This requirement appears to require that all Program/Project Manager/Director resources also need to be able to meet Business Operations Specialist qualifications. Is this the government's intent? Please clarify if the requirements apply to all Program/Project Manager/Director resources.	The evaluation factor has been updated to replace “Business Operations Specialist” with “Program/Project/Director”.

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28.	Section E3-2.1 Volume I –Non-Price Factors, Page 82	Factor 3 –Past Performance Evaluation Criteria, “For cited references, the Government will make only two attempts to contact a relevant reference for obtaining past performance information.” Will the government notify the offeror, during the evaluation phase, if they are unsuccessful in contacting the references?	No, not unless a need to do so arises.
29.	Section E3-2.1 Volume I –Non-Price Factors, Page 82	How is the Offeror’s Past Performance rating effected by past performance questionnaires that are not returned? For example, if eight of the nine are returned, what will the effect on the offerors rating be?	See Response to Question #6. Consequently, offerors are instructed to verify and ensure all information provided in support of your cited references for past performance is complete, comprehensive, accurate, and current.  If no past performance questionnaires are received for a cited contract and no other pertinent past performance information can be obtained, such as through Past Performance Information Retrieval System, the offeror will be evaluated neither favorably nor unfavorably for past performance on that cited contract.
30.	Section E3-2.1 Volume I –Non-Price Factors, Page 84	Will post award ad-hoc teaming be allowed?	No but post award subcontracting will be allowed.
31.	E3-2.3 Proposal Submittal and Format, Page 87	The Draft RFP states that proposals must be readable in Adobe Reader and Microsoft Office	Offerors may use either Adobe PDF or Microsoft Office 2010.

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		2010. Does this mean that potential prime contractors shall submit an Adobe PDF version as well as a MS Office 2010 version or is either Adobe PDF <b>OR</b> MS Office 2010 acceptable?	
32.	Attachment 2, Pricing Matrixes	Are rates to be proposed for Contractor or Government site? Does SSA need rates for both? If so, can the Government add columns to the pricing table allowing additional site rates? Can the Government provide Attachment 2 in an Excel format?	Rates are to be proposed for Contractor site only. SSA does not plan to provide space to contractors' onsite at SSA facilities unless a task order specifies it. Yes, Attachment 2- Pricing Matrix will be provided in an Excel format.
33.	Attachment 3, Labor Categories and Qualifications	In the labor category descriptions, the Government requires the majority of the LCATS to possess expert knowledge or knowledge of FEDRAMP requirements. As FEDRAMP knowledge is generally only required for personnel associated with cloud based hosting or security, can the Government make this requirement only applicable to those personnel it intends to be involved in establishing or maintaining cloud based hosting or security?	FEDRAMP will remain as part of the requirements. If the task order is not cloud-related, then this requirement does not have to be met.
34.	Attachment 3, Labor Categories and Qualifications	In the labor category descriptions, the Government requires the majority of the LCATS to possess expert knowledge or knowledge of Federal Cybersecurity Strategy and Implementation Plan (CSIP) (refer to OMB M-16-04) and related OMB and DHS cyber	CSIP will remain as part of the requirements. If the task order is not cyber-related, then this requirement does not have to be met.

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		security initiatives. As this cybersecurity knowledge is generally only required for cybersecurity staff, can the Government make this requirement only applicable to those personnel it intends to be involved in establishing or maintaining cybersecurity?	
35.	Attachment 3, Labor Categories and Qualifications, Page 2	In discussing adding additional labor categories, the Government notes: "If the CO and the multiple awardee contractor(s) cannot reach agreement on a negotiated rate, the unique skill sets must be procured outside of this contract, or otherwise be negotiated under an existing labor category as referenced herein, for which the Contractor's existing fixed-hourly rates will apply." Does this mean that all awardees of the IDIQ must agree on negotiated rate and labor category changes?	Yes, if any labor category changes are implemented, all awardees must comply.
36.	Attachment 4, SOW Section 4, Page 3	The draft SOW references SSA's System Development Life Cycle (SDLC). Can the Government provide offerors documentation on SSA's current SDLC?	This information will be provided at the time of award. The experience the Government seeks from vendors is knowledge and expertise in typical SDLC methods including waterfall, agile, etc. These methods are noted in the SOW.
37.	Attachment 4, SOW Section 4, Page 5	The Draft SOW indicates that deliverables are to be prepared in accordance with SSA's Software Process Improvement Guidelines, the Project Resource Guide (PRIDE). As PRIDE is	Deliverables are at a task order level; therefore, upon award, all awardees will have access to SSA's PRIDE.

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		not available outside of the SSA's intranet, can the Government provide offerors documentation on PRIDE?	
38.	Attachment 4, SOW Section 6, Page 15	Can the Government provide examples of the work or positions where the Government may provide waivers for the use of non-US citizens outside of the US? (e.g. development and test outside the Government's environments)	All work needs to be performed in the continental United States.
39.	Attachment 4, SOW Section 6, Page 15	Government Furnished Property: Will the Government be responsible for the ownership of any Software licenses needed?	Yes, the Government will be responsible for the ownership of all software licenses purchased through the IDIQ contract.
40.	Attachment 4, SOW Section 11, Page 22	Please confirm that "RAS" refers to the Resource Accounting System?	Yes, RAS refers to Resource Accounting System. The Statement of Work has been updated to include the full spelling of the acronym.
41.	Attachment 4, SOW Section 11, Page 23	Is it the Government's intent that for any deliverable due date that falls on a holiday or weekend, the deliverable is due the following business day?	This will be defined at the task order level.
42.	Attachment 4, SOW Section 11, Page 23	How many yearly labor hours is the Government using to define an FTE?	SSA is using 1,920 hours = 1 FTE (160 hours removed for 10 federal holidays and 2 weeks for vacation time)
43.	DRAFT –Attn 2 –Pricing Matrixes	Does the government anticipate a staffing mix	No, the staffing mix identified in the Attachment 2: Pricing Matrix is just

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		similar to the pricing evaluation in resulting IDIQ task orders? Attachment 2: Pricing Matrix assumes experience staff are required to perform the work (e.g. ITS3 and SME3 account for over 50% of the total evaluation hours). Is the government anticipating resulting IDIQ task orders requiring a majority of staff at the Level 3 experience and capability level?	for Price evaluation purposes.
44.	DRAFT –Attn 3 Labor Categories and Qualifications	The offeror should propose education and experience levels for each position description, broken out by position level, as indicated on the following pages. <b>Question:</b> Potential Offeror recommends that the Government standardize the education and experience levels of each position; otherwise, it presents an ‘unequal evaluation’ issue when evaluating prices if Offerors propose different requirements for each position (“apples versus oranges”).	SSA will not be standardizing the education and experience levels of each position nor will the Government be providing minimum requirements. Any minimum required years of experience/education/certification requirements will be defined in the Statements of Work at the task order level.
45.	DRAFT –Attn 4 Statement of Work	Please confirm that specific acceptance criteria for deliverables will be identified in RFTOPs/task order level.	Correct, specific acceptance criteria will be defined at the task order level.
46.	DRAFT –Attn 6 Offeror Reps and Certs	There is no check box in paragraph (b) to indicate whether an offeror has selected this choice. Please add a check box.	SSA is revising the solicitation to add a check box.
47.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; B-3(c)	How many Task Orders does SSA anticipate releasing in Contract Year 1 once the IDIQ is	SSA cannot determine the number at this time.



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		awarded?	
48.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; B-3(c)	Will any of the anticipated Task Orders to be released during Contract Year 1 be re-competed of work currently being performed on the ITSSC IDIQ? If so, where does this work align to the current Task Areas identified in Attn 4_SOW and who are the incumbent(s) for this current work?	Yes, they can be current work that has to be renewed. It aligns with all the areas defined in the SOW.
49.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; b-3(a)(1)	The Government reserves the right to use the pricing arrangements authorized for use under this contract in conjunction with an award fee, and performance, or delivery incentives when the award fee or incentive is based solely on factors other than cost. <b>Question:</b> Please confirm that the award fee will only be used in conjunction with a Fixed-Price contract-type.	Yes, it would only be for Firm Fixed Price task orders (if used).
50.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; b-3(b)(1)	The Contractor must provide a task order proposal (TOP) that contains the Contractor's proposed total price to perform the services outlined in the SOW, along with any other information (e.g., information related to the cited evaluation criteria) the Government requires to assist with making a best value award decision. <b>Question:</b> Please confirm that Contractors are not required to bid on all issued RFTOPs.	Correct, contractors are not required to bid on all the Request for Task Order Proposals.
51.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; b-3(b)(4)	The minimum contract guarantee will be obligated at the contract level upon award of the	The funds remain obligated on the contract and the task order will

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		IDIQ contract and subsequent task orders will not obligate additional funds until the initial funding has been depleted. If/when awarded a task order, will the obligated funds at the contract level be re-aligned to the task order level until depleted?	authorize the use of those funds.
52.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; C3-5(d)	Contractors are required to flowdown the Key Personnel clause to subcontractors. If a subcontractor does not have any key personnel, this clause would not apply. Potential Offeror recommends removing the requirement to make this a mandatory flow-down for subcontractors that do not possess Key Personnel.	Contractors are required to include the <u>substance</u> of 2352.209-1 Key Personnel in any subcontracts awarded.
53.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; C3-9 (d)(4)	With respect to contractor's responsibility for "any cost for any data breach and/or remediation actions that might arise from the security/PII loss incident", we understand that the terms "data breach" and "security/PII loss incident" refer to the breach of PII that is within Contractor's possession and control and arising from the contractual services performed by the Contractor, consistent with the definition of "Lost, compromised, or potentially compromised PII" set forth on pages 40-41 of the Draft RFP (Section C3-9(a)). We wish to confirm this interpretation as a contractor would be unable to put in place processes to protect against a breach if such PII were not in its possession and control. Does this reflect an accurate interpretation of Section C3-	Yes, this reflects an accurate interpretation of Section C3-9(d)(4).

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		9(d)(4)? If not accurate, please provide applicable definitions of “data breach” and “security/PII loss incident” in the context of Contractor’s potential liability under Section C3-9.	
54.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; C3-23(5) (A)	(A) is broadly written in its current form. Potential Offeror requests that the Government clarify this section as follows (see suggested revision in bold underline): “If the Contractor, in the performance of work under the task orders awarded under this contract or by any other means, obtains access to information, such as SSA's plans, policies, reports, studies, financial plans, or data, which has not been released to the public <b><u>and which would give the Contractor an unfair competitive advantage under the OCI principles of FAR 9.5</u></b> , the Contractor agrees not to:”	No, SSA is not revising the clause as requested.
55.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001; C3-23(5)(A)(ii)	Omission of Word – There appears to be a word omitted from this section. We suggest revising as follows (see bold/underlined): (ii) compete for work at SSA not already covered by the exclusion in paragraph (4) above based on such information for a period of 6 months after completion <b><u>or</u></b> release of such information to the public, whichever is first;	SSA is revising the clause to add the missing word “or”.
56.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E3-2.1	The RFP required past performance references to have an annual obligated value of \$100 million. It is not clear whether this amount is for	See responses to Questions #4 and #5. The revised \$70M obligated refers to each year of contract performance.

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		every contract year, or only in some years. For IDIQ contracts, the initial and final years of contracts are often much less than the higher annual values in the middle of the contract as the contracts ramp up and ramp down. Request the government clarify that the \$100 million /300 FTE minimum is for one or more years of the contract.	
57.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E3-2.1	<p>Under Factor 1 – Corporate Experience, the instructions require narrative on the references that includes:</p> <p>5. <i>Provide a complete and full description of the services provided for each single contract listed for corporate experience. Specifically, describe the extent to which the work required under the contract is similar in size, scope, and complexity to the requirements as described herein;</i></p> <p>6. <i>Demonstrate the depth and breadth that this experience represents a similar combination of work assignments, activities, and functions involving similar degrees of difficulty in the work to be performed as described herein. Note: Responses must specifically address the information listed within the five sub-factors outlined above;</i></p> <p>7. <i>Include any additional information that will further describe the activities/functions performed and demonstrate the relationship of such experience to the requirements of this solicitation;</i></p>	See response to Question #6. SSA will be instructions for Corporate Experience and Past Performance will be revised to remove duplication.

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		<p>8. <i>Describe any significant problems that arose and explain how they were solved;</i></p> <p>9. <i>Type of Milestones/deliverables required under the contracts; and</i></p> <p>The instructions for Past Performance, page 83 require: <i>The following information regarding relevant contracts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>A narrative description of each cited contract's major performance objectives, as well as descriptions of the supplies and/or services provided, and how those supplies and/or services were/are similar and relevant to the requirements as set forth herein; and</i></li><li>• <i>Describe any significant performance problems that were encountered on the cited/referenced contract, and explain how you, if applicable, were able to resolve/correct the problem.</i></li></ul> <p><b>Question:</b> The information in past performance is duplicative of that in corporate experience. Both sections require a description of the services provided and relevance to the draft RFP. Both ask for descriptions of problems encountered and how they were solved. Would the government consolidate the information required in the proposal for Corporate Experience and Past Performance into a single location to eliminate the duplication?</p>	
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58.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E3-2.1	<p>“The Non-Price Factors Volume is limited to 250 pages (inclusive of appendices, exhibits, schedules, annexes, and attachments). Provide only the specific information requested. Any information submitted that exceeds the first 250 pages (inclusive of appendices, exhibits, schedules, annexes, and attachments) of the Non-Price Factors Volume will not be evaluated.”</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Is it the government’s intent to assess Past Performance Questionnaires within the 250 page limit?</p>	See responses to Questions #6 and #11.
59.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E3-2.1(d)(V)(3)	<p>The draft RFP requires Offerors to provide the number and dollar value of contract completed per contract year.</p> <p>Please clarify what is meant by the phrase “number” in this section.</p>	SSA is revising the solicitation to instruct offerors to submit the “Total Contract Value inclusive of all options, if exercised” and the “Dollar amount obligated in each annual period of performance”.
60.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E.3-2.1	<p>The RFP requests 3 individual references for each contract in corporate experience. From the remaining instructions, it is not clear how to interpret the term “reference”. If the references are simply 3 different points of contact for the 3 referenced contracts, then nearly all of the information requested for “each references” would be identical to the other two for the same contract. If the references are 3 different projects under a single contract referenced in corporate experience, then having separate descriptions from that provided in corporate experience would be required.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Is the government referring to “references” as the three individual points of</p>	For Past Performance, SSA is requesting identification of each of the 3 individual points of contact (Contracting Officer’s Representative; Task Manager/Technical Point-of-Contract/Program Manager; and Contracting Officer/Contract Specialist) for each single contract referenced in Corporate Experience.

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		contact for a referenced single contract in corporate experience? Or three different projects under the single contract?	
61.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E.3-2.1	<p>The RFP requires three questionnaires for each of the three contracts referenced, and for the questionnaires be returned to the offeror. For many contracts, these requirements will be impossible to meet for a multitude of reasons. Many contracting officers specifically are unwilling to respond to questionnaires provided to them by contractors. They will generally only respond to queries received directly from the contract agency issuing the RFP. There are also clients that refuse to complete questionnaires because they are compliant with CPARS submission requirements and assert that CPARS obviate the need for questionnaires. The practice of routing questionnaires back through the offeror is not typical. Generally they are sent directly back to the contracting activity. In previous solicitations that initially requested the questionnaires be sent through the offerors, clients who otherwise would have completed them would not do so. There are also clients who by organizational requirements will collaborate on questionnaire inputs between PM, COR, and KO and only provide a single response. The questionnaire requirements for this solicitation will be considered overly burdensome by many clients which will prevent offerors from being able to include references which best meet the relevance requirements of this solicitation.</p>	See response to Question #6

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		<p><b>Question:</b> We request that the government make the following changes to the questionnaire requirements: Only require questionnaires from references who do not participate in CPARS. For contracts without CPARS, provide a method to directly submit the questionnaires to the government, and a way for offerors to verify with SSA that they have been received. Allow bidders to attach applicable CPARS reports as attachments not included in the page count.</p>	
62.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E3-2.1(h)	Incorporation of letters or agreements. Please provide examples of letters or agreements the Government is looking for. Also, please elaborate on what is required in terms of “timeframe of letters or agreements with those Small Businesses identified”.	SSA is revising the solicitation to remove this language.
63.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E3-2.1(h)	<p>“Offeror must submit a plan using the “Small Business Subcontracting Plan (Model Plan Outline)” at Attachment 5 or a similar format.”</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Please verify that Offeror’s are able to submit a plan using their own format.</p>	Offerors must submit a “Small Business Subcontracting Plan” using the format in the attachment to the solicitation.
64.	Draft SSA-RFP-17-1001 E3-3.2.2(II)(2)	<p>“Degree to which the general staffing plan shows the Offeror’s understanding of the Government’s labor categories and qualifications as evidenced by the Offeror’s cross-walk between all proposed Offeror’s labor categories and qualifications and Government’s labor categories and qualifications.”</p> <p><b>Question:</b> The qualifications in Attachment 3, Labor Categories and Qualifications are</p>	SSA will not be providing education and experience levels for each labor category.



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		provided as examples and are not specific to any labor categories. Currently only a general description is provided for each labor category. Please clarify if the Government will provide qualifications, to include education and experience, for each labor category to perform a cross-walk.	
65.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors	Given that this Request for Proposal (RFP) is for an Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract; please clarify if the Social Security Administration (SSA) considers an annual obligation requirement value as compliant if an offeror's corporate experience is an aggregate of Task Orders (TO) obligated values under a Contract Vehicle such as an IDIQ, Multiple Award Schedule, Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) or a single awarded contract?	Yes, the aggregate of the annual obligated amount, by the same agency/organization, for task orders awarded under a single IDIQ contract or call orders under a single Blanket Purchase Agreement will be used in the evaluation of the offeror's corporate experience.
66.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors	<p>The RFP requirement for annual obligated amount seems inconsistent with the requirement of 300 contractor personnel.</p> <p>For example, an annual obligated amount of \$100M with 300 contractor personnel at 1,920 hours/year/person is an average hourly rate of \$170/hour. This average hourly rate for the RFP's described work is inconsistent with historical labor rates awarded by SSA in the recent past.</p> <p>To better align the corporate experience/past performance threshold to historical SSA average labor rates, will the Government reduce</p>	See response to Question #5

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		the annual obligated amount requirement to \$45M?	
67.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors	<p>Does SSA require offeror’s corporate experience/past performance to meet the annual obligated amount exceeding \$100M and 300 contractor resources for EACH year of the contract’s period of performance?</p> <p>Would SSA accept a corporate experience/past performance with an annual obligated amount exceeding \$100M and over 300 contractor personnel for ONE year of the contract’s period of performance?</p>	<p>See response to question #5</p> <p>SSA will evaluate the annual obligated amount for each year of the contract’s period of performance against the \$70M for assessing similarity to the work described in the Statement of Work for purposes of assigning an adjectival rating to the offeror’s Corporate Experience.</p>
68.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors	<p>The requirement to submit three contracts with an annual obligated amount exceeding \$100M and 300 contractor personnel will greatly limit competition and exclude many qualified contractors. To enhance competition:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will SSA consider changing the requirement to read “offerors must submit at least one corporate experience/past performance contract that exceeds an annual obligated amount of \$100M and 300 contractor personnel.”? OR</li> </ol> <p>Will SSA consider reducing the annual obligated amount and contractor personnel requirement to \$45M and 150 contractor personnel, respectively?</p>	See response to question #5
69.	Draft RFP: f. Factor 3 – Past Performance	Typically, completed past performance questionnaires (PPQs) are sent by the party completing the questionnaire directly to the Government by the proposal due date. Please	See response to question #6

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		confirm that completed PPQs should be returned directly to SSA and not included in the offeror's proposal.	
70.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors; e.Factor 2 – Management Plan; III. Experience and Qualifications of Proposed Key Personnel	Will the Government evaluate resumes for personnel not designated as key?	No, not at contract award but during competition of task orders.
71.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors; e.Factor 2 – Management Plan; III. Experience and Qualifications of Proposed Key Personnel	May offerors identify positions as key in addition to the four key personnel positions specified in the RFP? If so, can offerors submit resumes for these additional key personnel to be evaluated by the Government?	No
72.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors; e.Factor 2 – Management Plan; III. Experience and Qualifications of Proposed Key Personnel	SSA has identified four key personnel and offerors need to submit four resumes. Are these personnel assigned at the IDIQ or TO level?	Those four personnel will be identified as key on the IDIQ contract but may be used across task orders. SSA is revising the solicitation to add an additional clause to identify Key Personnel at the task order level for incorporation in awarded task orders, when appropriate.
73.	Draft RFP: E.3-2.2 Volume II – Price Factors	Completing Attachment 2, Pricing Matrixes states: “TAB 1 – Labor Pricing, will automatically calculate the estimated annual price and total labor price for the base and all option periods after fixed hourly rates are entered for each labor category.”	See response to Question #22

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		The format of this attachment is currently a PDF and is inconsistent with proposal instructions. Please confirm SSA will provide an excel spreadsheet.	
74.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors	<p>The RFP states: “Factor 1 - Corporate Experience (see Section E3-3.2.1): Describe the breadth and depth of your relevant corporate experience in each of the five task areas identified in the SOW by submitting information that describes three single contracts that encompass performing work of a similar size, scope and complexity as described herein. Each of the three single contracts that reference your corporate experience must be as a prime contractor on single contract performing all five task areas with an annual obligated amount exceeding \$100M, and that provides a minimum of 300 contractor personnel supporting all five task areas. <b><i>Note: The Government is not requesting, nor will it accept, information on any proposed subcontractor’s experience, teaming arrangements, or information on experience gained in the five task areas if the experience was not similar and relevant to that described herein.</i></b>”</p> <p>Based on the “Note”, will SSA consider a corporate experience reference compliant with Factor 1 requirements if the Offeror’s subcontractor has a relevant (prime) corporate</p>	See response to Question #1.

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		experience/past performance?	
75.	Draft RFP: E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors	According to published FY2015 data in <a href="http://usaspending.gov">usaspending.gov</a> only two incumbent contractors, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman, meet the corporate experience/past performance relevancy requirements for the annual obligated amount exceeding \$100M with past performance in SSA. Additionally, when expanding the search across the entire Federal Government under NAICS code 541519, there does not appear to be any vendors (incumbents Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman excluded) that have the ability to generate three corporate experience/past performance references with the scope of work (SOW) that is relevant to the SSA ITSSC SOW (there were other contracts exceeding \$100M under this NAICS code, but the SOW was focused on hardware reselling and other services not relevant to the SSA ITSSC SOW). In order to encourage competition, we strongly urge the Government to modify this restrictive requirement so that other companies besides Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman can bid.	See response to Question #5
76.	Section B-4 Period of Performance; Section C2-2 52.216-18 Ordering; C2-6 52.217-9 Option to Extend the Term of the Contract	Section B-4 indicates the Option IV Ordering Period ends 9/28/2026 with the potential to extend services provided for 6 months. Section C2-2 indicates orders may be issued until 03/31/2027.	The end date for the ordering of task orders, including any option to extend services, is 3/31/2027.

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		<p>Section C2-6 indicates the total duration of this contract, including the exercise of any options under this clause, shall not exceed 123 months from 1/2/2017.</p> <p>Could SSA confirm the end date of the ordering period of performance, including any option to extend services?</p>	
77.	C3-22 Contractor Training	<p>...the agency expects the contractor to provide employees who are fully trained in non-agency-specific commercial off-the-shelf information technology in use by the agency.</p> <p>Will SSA provide a list with the RFP of non-agency-specific commercial off-the-shelf information technology that is in use by the agency?</p>	All technologies, software, etc. are listed in the solicitation.
78.	E3-2.1 Volume I – Non-Price Factors	<p>Each of the three single contracts that reference your corporate experience must be as a prime contractor on single contract performing all five task areas with an annual obligated amount exceeding \$100M, and that provides a minimum of 300 contractor personnel supporting all five task areas.</p> <p>Would SSA consider requiring that vendors demonstrate the ability to bring industry best practices to SSA via commercial, international, or other leading experiences for citizen services as part of the corporate experience evaluation criteria?</p>	No, SSA will not be changing the identified five task areas.

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79.		Consideration: Allowing prime bidders the flexibility to submit team member qualifications and past performance in the Corporate Experience and Past Performance sections to satisfy the three (3) Corporate Experience Reference requirements. We also suggest SSA allow bidders to submit at least one (1) Corporate Experience Reference from a major teaming partner.	No, SSA will not accept information on any proposed subcontractors or teaming arrangements. See response to Question #1.
80.		Consideration: Allowing prime bidders the flexibility to provide up to 3 contract references including testimonials that can validate the contractor performance and provide the desired information.	No, see response to Question #60.
81.		Consideration: Assigning another non-price evaluation factor for the “Innovations & Modernization” qualifications proposed by prime bidders in the RFP response.	No, SSA is not revising the solicitation to add an evaluation factor for “Innovations & Modernization”.
82.	Draft - Request for Proposals - SSA-RFP-17-1001; E3-3.2.1	Is SSA requesting that we provide three (3) contracts that individually demonstrate performance of all five task areas and have an annual obligated amount of \$100M or is SSA requesting 3 contracts that when combined demonstrate performance in all five task areas and the total annual obligated amount between all three is \$100M?	SSA is requesting offerors to provide three contracts that individually demonstrate performance of all five task areas and have an annual obligated amount of \$70M.

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83.	Draft - Request for Proposals - SSA-RFP-17-1001; E3-2.1	Will SSA consider letting the Prime Contractor utilize Corporate Experience of their Subcontractors in satisfying this requirement?	No, see response to Question #1
84.	General	Are annual or more frequent security controls assessments (SCA) performed against the project environments? If so, in which of the environments are the SCAs executed, Development, Test, SI, FIT, or Production?	SSA performs annual security audits.
85.	<b><i>Attachment 4 – Statement of Work;</i></b> Tasks; Lifecycle activities for software improvement and web/interface	Is there an Agile version of your SDLC available? If there is, where can it be found?	It will be available upon award to the IDIQ awardees.
86.	<b><i>Attachment 4 – Statement of Work;</i></b> Attachment A; Hardware, Software, Tools and Technologies List	Beyond Endeavor and MKS, are there any other software configuration management tools used on this contract?	At this time, contractors only use what is stated in the Statement of Work but contractors must conform to any new software configuration management tools SSA adopts in the future.
87.	E3-2.1	Section E3-2.1 states that “the Non-Price Factors Volume is limited to 250 pages (inclusive of appendices, exhibits, schedules, annexes, and attachments).” While we appreciate the SSA’s reduction of the prior RFP’s page limits by half, SSA could make the proposal evaluation process more objective by assigning reasonable page limits to sub-	See response to Question #11.



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		elements of the Non-Price Factors Volume, ensuring offerors provide similarly structured responses. This also offers SSA the advantage of reducing page-counts further.	
88.	E3-2.1.h	Section E3-2.1.h states that the “Small Business Subcontracting Plan must be submitted by only the apparently successful Offeror(s).” Please confirm that offerors are not expected to include a Small Business Subcontracting Plan with their initial proposals.	SSA is revising the solicitation to include the requirement to submit (in Volume II – Price Factors) a Small Business Subcontracting Plan with their initial proposals.
89.	DRAFT_-_SSA-RFP-17-1001.pdf; Non-Price factors	During the 10 year period of performance SSA will face dramatic challenges to their mission with increasing numbers of customers, increasing complexity in service delivery, and surely declining budgets. SSA would benefit from partnerships with companies well-versed in applying innovation to IT transformations to meet such challenges. Will SSA be evaluating innovation explicitly as its own criteria or within existing criteria?	The Non-Price factors Offerors will be evaluated on are Corporate Experience, Management Plan, Past Performance, and Section 508 & SSA’s Accessibility Requirements.
90.	DRAFT_-_Attn_7_-_Past_Performance_Questionnaire.pdf	Many Government departments and agencies no longer allow their employees to respond to ad hoc past performance questionnaires because those departments and agencies are now using Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS) as their single source of information about contractor performance. In order for all offerors to be able to provide the best and most	See response to Question #6

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		relevant past performance references, will the SSA accept a recent PPIR in lieu of Attachment 7, Past Performance Questionnaire?	
91.		To meet SSA's stated objective of creating an agency-level IT vehicle that can be used to compete tasks under FAR Part 16.505(b)(1)(i), vehicle-level evaluation and award processes will require that all bidders are pre-qualified in all task areas. As a new entrant, we ask SSA to consider opening qualification requirements within corporate experience evaluation considerations to name fewer specific technologies, substituting general technology categories instead. This would allow potential to award to new, innovative providers who can demonstrate technology expertise and success in adjacent areas that support and compliment SSA systems today and in the future.	SSA will not be restructuring the Statement of Work or the solicitation because of this question.
92.	Pricing	We see that the Statement of Work now has regional support requirements, and we ask that the addition of a Travel CLIN be made to the final contract.	If travel were required, it would be accounted for under the Other Direct Costs CLIN at the task order level.
93.	Statement of Work	Consider renaming "Task E" to PROGRAM Management, as opposed to CONTRACT Management. We believe that the sub-tasks that span the entire set of tasks should be placed in this group (Emerging Technology support, EA, Security, PRIDE compliance, etc.), in addition to the reporting and overall Program Management tasks already identified in this task.	Thank you for the suggestions but SSA will not be changing the Statement of Work based on the suggestions.

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		<p>The SOW contains descriptions of competencies and areas of “expertise” that should be included in the Labor Category descriptions (personnel) and in the Corporate Experience (bidder) material in the solicitation. We believe it would be more advantageous to confine the task descriptions to the actual tasks and activities (such as “providing guidance”).</p> <p>Certain tasks could potentially be better aligned within the Scope; for example, we feel that Task C should be simply “Engineering” and include engineering design and support of all the system tiers, providing a more harmonized system view.</p>	
94.	Past Performance Questionnaire	Past Performance Questionnaire was extremely detailed but not onerous. We request to allow our respondents at least 20 business days to consider and complete the questionnaires, and to use them for contracts for which CPARs are not available. We recommend that contracts with existing CPARs be used in lieu of questionnaires as many agencies/customers will not submit questionnaires when CPARs are available.	See response to Question #6.